

## ***Health Information Exchange***

### **What is HIE?**

Health Information Exchange (HIE) enables healthcare providers to transfer data through secure electronic networks among disparate health information systems. The goal of HIE is to deliver the right health information to the right place at the right time — providing safer, more timely, efficient, effective, equitable, patient-centered care. **Benefits**

When clinical records are available at the point of care, patients receive more accurate and timely service. Patients generally seek health care close to home. Regional dedication to health information exchange ensures a local sounding board for patients and health care communities to receive the benefits tailored to their needs. Additional benefits include:

- Help health care providers make more informed treatment decisions, improving patient outcomes
- Improved care coordination between providers
- Achieve State and Federal program incentives
- Better workflow efficiency and lower administrative costs
- Enhanced communication between hospitals, laboratories, pharmacies and physician offices
- Easier access and retrieval of clinical data
- More accurate feedback and benchmarking
- Improved audit trails
- Reduced duplicate testing

### **HIE in Maryland**

The Maryland HIE vision is to advance the health and wellness of Marylanders by implementing a clinical data sharing utility that ensures consumers have access to the highest quality, most efficient, and safest care by giving providers access to the right information at the right time. Information

available through the Maryland HIE include lab results, radiology reports, discharge summaries, consultation notes, history and physical notes, operative notes, and secure clinical messaging and referrals.

The Chesapeake Regional Information System for Our Patients, or CRISP, is a not-for-profit membership corporation that was selected to manage the statewide HIE in 2009 through a competitive bidding process.

### **Secure Email**

DIRECT Messaging is a secure and encrypted email service that supports electronic communication between health care providers. This new service is being offered by the Maryland statewide health information exchange and continues the goal of securely sharing patient information among treating providers in Maryland.

DIRECT Messaging allows health care providers and staff, including those using different electronic health care record systems, to electronically send messages to one another and attach and exchange health information when necessary through a secure email solution. All Maryland-based health care providers are eligible for a DIRECT Messaging account. The only technology needed to begin sharing information is an internet connection. CRISP is currently providing secure email free of charge to practices for the first 12 months.

### **The CRISP Portal**

The CRISP Portal is a free tool available to clinical staff. As clinical information is created and shared with the statewide HIE, it is made accessible in real time for participating health care providers through the portal. The portal allows providers the ability to securely look up patient information through the Internet. The portal retrieves the clinical data from participants and displays it in a view-only screen at the point of care. The portal facilitates access to patient data across institutional boundaries and provides physician practices access to lab results, radiology reports, discharge summaries, consultations, operative notes, and transfer summaries. All 46 acute care

hospitals are contributing data to the HIE. To see which of these hospitals are currently providing clinical information, please visit [www.crisphealth.org](http://www.crisphealth.org) and select the Participating Providers link.

The portal is available to all practices, including those without an EHR. The only equipment required to view data through the patient portal is an Internet connection and a Windows PC with Internet Explorer.

### **How Do I Connect?**

To learn about connecting to the HIE, please contact CRISP for further information. You may also speak with your EHR vendor or, if you are participating in the Regional Extension Center program, your Management Service Organization will provide assistance as well. CRISP may be contacted by phone at 877-95-CRISP or by email at [info@crisphealth.org](mailto:info@crisphealth.org).

It is critical that all data exchanged through the HIE is done so in a way that protects the privacy and security of a patient's health information. The MHCC assembled a Health Information Exchange Policy Board in 2009 with the responsibility for general oversight of the statewide HIE, including the authority to evaluate and recommend to the MHCC the privacy and security policies that will apply to all HIEs in Maryland.

On May 19, 2011, House Bill 784, Medical Records – Health Information Exchanges (HB 784) was signed into law. This law requires the MHCC to adopt regulations for the privacy and security of protected information exchanged through all HIEs in the state.

At the close of the 2012 fiscal year, approximately 13 privacy and security policies had been proposed and adopted by the policy board, including the following:

For more information contact: Maryland Health Care Commission | <http://mhcc.maryland.gov> | (410) 764-3460

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